

Iowa Joint Operator Certification and Training Coordination Committee

Friday, September 21, 2007 – IAMU Office, Ankeny, Iowa

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Jim McElvogue at 10:15 a.m.

Present were:

- Dale Acheson, IAWWA	- Jon Martens, IAWWA
- Dale Barrie, IRWA	- Jim McElvogue, IWPCA
- Jane Enfield, IDNR	- Steve Mrstik, KCC
- Dennis Hayworth, DMACC/KCC	- Harris Seidel, IWPCA
- Marty Hoffert, IAWWA	- Laurie Sharp, IDNR
- Shelli Grapp, IDNR	- Jill Soenen, IAMU
- Rhonda Guy, IRWA	- Jim Stricker, IWPCA
- Kirk Kemper, IAMU	- Jim Utter, IWPCA
- Marty Kunkel, IAMU	- Mike Wildung, IRWA

Visitors: Steve Moehlmann, Des Moines WRF

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Jim Stricker, seconded by Marty Hoffert, to adopt the agenda as distributed by e-mail a week earlier. Motion carried.

[NOTE: An agenda can be obtained from any Joint Committee member within the three days preceding a meeting of the Joint Committee.]

3. Approval of July 20, 2007 Minutes

The secretary requested the following change in the July 20 minutes as crafted by Laurie Sharp. Item 5b. Operator by Affidavit should be changed to read as follows:

The guidance document distributed in March has been reviewed by the Field Offices and will be submitted to the Water Supply Operations Section Supervisor for approval.

Moved by Harris Seidel, seconded by Steve Mrstik, that the above restatement of Item 5b in the July 20 minutes be approved. Motion carried.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Unfinished Business/Assignments

a. Backhoe Operator Training

At the May 18 meeting, Jill Soenen requested approval for CEU credit for a proposed hands-on backhoe operator training course to be given here at the IAMU campus probably with six contact hours. The decision was deferred at that time; and after a lengthy discussion during the July 20 meeting, a decision was again deferred until today's meeting.

Backhoe Operator is an approved Safety training topic in the Guidance Lists for all categories except WT. (Note that Safety training credit is limited to 20 percent of the renewal requirement.) Could Backhoe Operator training be considered under the topic entitled Distribution System; Mains, Taps, Maintenance, Repairs? Comments were generally favorable as to the importance of competent backhoe operation in distribution system work.

After further discussion, the following consensus was reached.

- Backhoe Operator training will not be listed as an Approved topic.
- If the course is given, IAMU will submit the course objectives and outline to IDNR staff who will judge the course on its merits and how well it is related to utility operation.
- The Joint Committee does not anticipate further discussion or involvement on this issue.

[Jon Martens assumed the chair at 10:40 a.m.]

b. Operator by Affidavit Guidance

A revised document, including comments by IDNR regional staff, was distributed on September 17 to Joint Committee members.

Minimum Visits. Marty Hoffert opened the discussion by pointing out that, as the guidelines are written, Grades I and II water distribution systems must be visited only once a month; while Grades I and II water treatment systems require visits of two or three days each week. This implies that WD is not very important. If we are trying to establish WD as deserving equal respect and attention and bring WD training requirements up to equal with WT, this is not helping.

Response.

- Many of these small WD facilities are “consecutive” systems which simply buy water and distribute it. Should the Guidance Document then include clarifying language?
- The statements on minimum visits should not control; the actual needs should control, and they are different for each facility. Competent, conscientious operators will do what is needed, not just the minimum.
- Is a schedule of minimum visits needed at all? There were comments both pro and con.
- A major improvement would be to reverse the order in the Guidance Document by placing Minimum Affidavit Operator Responsibilities first and Minimum Visits last.
- The Guidance Document will receive further review.

General Comments.

- Overall comments by Joint Committee members were very supportive. This subcommittee took on a very difficult assignment and should be highly complimented on the result.
- This is a Guidance Document, not a Rule. It cannot be enforced, but it is a very important guide to good practice.
- Over past years, the Field Offices have developed their own individual policies and attitudes toward operation by affidavit. It is hoped that this document will guide them toward a more uniform practice.

c. Facilities Classification

Jim Stricker reported that he had met with John Veach regarding the concerns John had expressed about points given to some wastewater treatment units and processes. The issues raised are under review.

6. New Business

a. On-line Training

Laurie Sharp reported that IDNR will embark on a project dealing with on-line training following ABC guidance. No staff is currently available to work on this, so the project has not yet begun.

b. Nominating Committee

The Chair appointed Mike Wildung, Jim Utter, Dale Acheson, and Kirk Kemper as the Nominating Committee for 2008-09 officers.

7. Representative Comments

a. IDNR

Shelli Grapp was introduced as the new Water Supply Operations Section Supervisor and was officially welcomed by the Chair Jon Martens.

Laurie Sharp announced that certified decertification letters will go out Monday, September 24. Only about six percent of the operators will have lost their certificates for various reasons, most of them through retirement or leaving the field. She estimated that fewer than 10 are losing their certification simply through not earning enough CEUs for renewal.

b. IAMU

Jill Soenen announced that IAMU's Grade I Water Treatment Workshops are scheduled as follows:

Mason City – October 10	Atlantic – October 18
Storm Lake – October 11	Independence – October 24
Ankeny (IAMU) – October 17	Coralville – October 25

IAMU's 13th Annual Water and Wastewater Operators' Training Workshop will be held November 13-15 at the Holiday Inn Northwest in Des Moines.

c. IAWWA

Marty Hoffert noted the Iowa Section Annual Conference in Davenport October 9-11. The Region 2 fall meeting will be held October 4 in Mason City.

d. IRWA

Dale Barrie reported that IRWA's fall conference in September at Okoboji had an attendance of over 350. An additional conference is scheduled for October 8 and 9 at Dubuque.

e. ISU

No representative present.

f. IWPCA

Jim Utter and Jim McElvogue announced IWPCA Regional meetings as follows:

Region 4 – October 5, Casey
Region 1 – October 21, Manchester
Region 5 – October 31, Newton

g. KCC

Steve Mrstik noted that Kirkwood's new training catalogs will be in the mail soon. The on-site 30-hour Basic Training Course is still being given.

Dennis Hayworth distributed a flyer on the training for Small Systems Water Operators being provided around the state by One Source during October. Training topics are Water Quality Issues in the

Distribution System, Variable Frequency Drives, and Chlorination. The training is given at no cost for operators of systems serving populations of less than 3,300.

8. Assignments

Staff – Report on CEUs earned

Staff – Revisions to Operator by Affidavit Guidance Document

9. Next Meeting

Friday, November 16, 2007, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the IAMU office in Ankeny.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Jim McElvogue; seconded by Mike Wildung; motion carried. The Joint Committee adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Harris Seidel, Secretary